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Dear Friends:

Welcome to another edition of Youth Source....we have a lot to share with you!



- If you have not visited our new website, I think that you will be pleasantly surprised at the scope and depth of our pages...check it out at [www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission](http://www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission).
- Needham Unplugged 2008 was a great success within Needham, statewide (many Massachusetts communities copied our program), and even nationally as we appeared on CNN.
- Make A Statement Day 2008 at Needham High School was an event where the entire high school community decorated t-shirts with quotes of their choice. Over 800 t-shirts were distributed; view the innovative work of both teachers and students at [www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission/masd](http://www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission/masd).
- This spring we launched a new group for "stay-at-home" parents; it was quite a success. Special thanks to our partners at the YMCA and Middlesex Savings Bank.
- We recently completed all sessions for this academic year for programs such as Babysitter Training Seminars, A Conversation...For Parents of Teens, and Books and Bridges — please contact the office or visit our website to learn more about the aforementioned and/or to view participant evaluations.

*Jon Mattleman*

ACCORDING TO MARK J. PENN, AUTHOR OF THE BOOK "MICROTRENDS," BELOW ARE A RESULTS OF A SURVEY OF PARENTS WHO WERE ASKED ABOUT HOW THEY PARENT THEIR CHILDREN:

**57%**

**Report that  
they are very  
strict**

**37%**

**Report that they  
are too  
permissive**

**91%**

**Report that other  
parents are too  
permissive**

## **A Letter From Two Graduating Senior at Needham High School**

Hello, our names are Emily Berkowitz and Gabby Katz and we are seniors at Needham High School. We both first became involved with the Youth Commission when we joined the Make A Statement Day (MASD) Club during our junior year. The MASD club helps students at NHS express their ideas, and beliefs, essentially the club allows students to express their own "voice" without the fear of judgment. This is accomplished by having two days after school where students can come to make t-shirts while they eat, listen to music, and enjoy the company of their peers and teachers. Students are welcome to express any idea, belief, quote, or song within reason on their shirt. Then all the students who make shirts wear them the following day during school.

When we first became involved in MASD, it was a small event that was relatively new to NHS. The Youth Commission had so much enthusiasm and excitement for MASD that it was contagious. While working with the Youth Commission we were able to collaborate with our peers and give MASD a "makeover" in order to involve more students and increase the amount of attendees to the day. Whenever we visited the Youth Commission during the planning of MASD, everyone who worked there always went out of their way to tell us how excited they were for MASD and offered us any extra help. With their help and teamwork with our peers, we were able to plan and carry out a successful event that exceeded everyone's expectations. During our senior year, we once again had the pleasure of planning MASD with the Youth Commission and we were able to surpass our goals for MASD for a second time. MASD has now become a tradition at NHS and we are sure that it will continue to grow in years to come.

From working with the Youth Commission on MASD, we heard about Take Back the Night (TBTN), which is a march and rally that promotes awareness against sexual and domestic violence. After having such a positive experience with MASD and an interest in women's rights, Emily immediately joined as one of the student planners for TBTN. Gabby, too, had a wonderful experience with MASD and had a passion for continuing programs that are advocacy based. TBTN was a large event that required a lot of planning in order to ensure that the event went smoothly. The Youth Commission was very helpful in making sure that we and our peers were able to secure guest speakers, bands, advertisement, donations, permits, support from the community, and much more. TBTN was an event that dealt with serious subjects so it was great to be able to have the Youth Commission to provide us with guidance in how to approach the subject of domestic and sexual violence with people of all ages. Our very first TBTN was a success and it set a great foundation for a tradition of TBTN's in Needham.

As seniors this is our last year working with the Youth Commission; although this saddens us, we have many happy memories and experiences from MASD and TBTN. We think the Youth Commission is an important part in creating a peaceful and warm community in NHS as well as the Town of Needham. We would like to thank the Youth Commission for inviting us into their warm family and allowing us to be part of some fantastic programs like Make A Statement Day and Take Back the Night.

*Gabby*

Gabby Katz

*Emily*

Emily Berkowitz



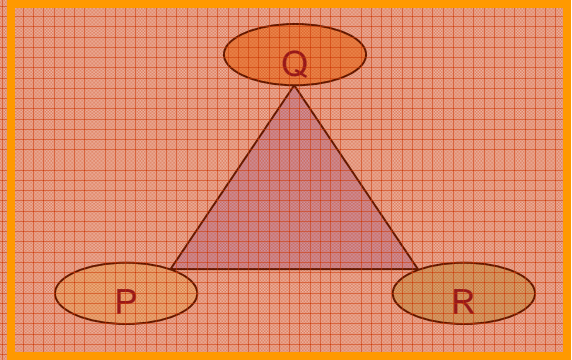
# QPR

## Suicide Prevention Training

Over the past few years, the Needham community has experienced several suicides that have impacted the town on many levels. To address this issue, Needham Suicide Prevention Coalition is offering a program entitled "QPR — Question, Persuade, Refer." This program was created by Paul Quinnett, Ph.D. and is modeled after the success of the CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation) medical intervention. It is based upon the several basic concepts including the notion that those who most need help in a suicidal crisis are the least likely to ask for it, that the person most likely to prevent a person dying by suicide is someone they already know, that prior to making a suicide attempt those in a suicidal crisis typically send warning signs of their distress and suicidal intent to those around them, and that when we solve the problems people kill themselves to solve the reasons for suicide disappear.

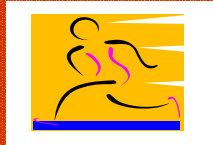
QPR is known as a gatekeeper training. According to the Surgeon General's *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention*, "key gatekeepers" are "people who regularly come into contact with individuals or families in distress." Gatekeeper training has been identified as one of a number of promising prevention strategies. Trainings are 90 minutes in length.

**Upcoming QPR Training Dates: November 5, 2008; January 21, 2009; and March 24, 2009.** To register or learn more please contact Jon Mattleman at 781-455-7518 x265 or at [Jmattleman@town.needham.ma.us](mailto:Jmattleman@town.needham.ma.us) or visit us online at [www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission/qpr](http://www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission/qpr).



## SUMMER PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH

### EXTREME LOOKS



Extreme Looks returns for its tenth summer! This four-day intensive workshop will explore how the media goes to extremes that distort girls' self-esteem, body image, and perceptions about relationships. Based on a model of wellness, the group will incorporate activities and discussions to teach participants safe ways to exercise and stay healthy, thus addressing the needs of the mind, body, and spirit. **Extreme Looks is scheduled for Monday, June 23rd through Thursday, June 26th from 1:00 to 4:00 and is open to girls currently in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades.** Special thanks to the YMCA for collaborating with us on this program. For more information please visit our website at [www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission/extremelooks](http://www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission/extremelooks) or contact Katy Colthart at 781-455-7518 x264 or by email at [Kcolthart@town.needham.ma.us](mailto:Kcolthart@town.needham.ma.us).

Thanks to the Needham Community Council, Project VAN (Volunteers Around Needham) will be back this year for its eleventh great summer! Project VAN offers youth ages 13 (or entering 8th grade) to 17 the opportunity to provide a valuable community service to non-profit organizations in Needham. Youth can register for one day, a few days, or all eight days. A sampling of the sites for this year's Project VAN includes Charles River ARC, Needham Community Council, Needham Public Library, Needham Park and Recreation, and Wingate at Needham. To register or for further information, please visit our website at [www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission/van](http://www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission/van) or contact Alexandra Hogan at 781.455.7518 x266 or by email at [Ahogan@town.needham.ma.us](mailto:Ahogan@town.needham.ma.us).

**This summer, Project VAN is scheduled for July 1<sup>st</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup>, July 8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>, and July 15<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup>.**

### PROJECT VAN



## **How does the community feel about the services of the Youth Commission?**

Below is a sampling of comments we have received in just the past few months...

**“Excellent speaker with enormous knowledge on the subject”**

...comment by a parent after a presentation by the Youth Commission

**“I have a co-worker from another town who wished her town had this resource”**

...comment by a parent who participated in the program “A Conversation..For Parents of Teen”

**“Your passion about this issue is moving and infectious”**

...comment by a parent who participated in a QPR Suicide Prevention Training

**“Before I was worried I didn’t know anything, but now I feel confident about babysitting”**

...comment on by a youth who participated in a Babysitting Training Seminar

**“You did a great job—very age appropriate and managed all the girls so everyone felt included”**

...comment on by a parent who participated in a Books and Bridges Program

**“Very informative and got me very aware and more careful about using the Internet”**

...comment on by a youth who participated in a Safe Surf Training

**“Sensitive, smart leader...respectful—you made people feel comfortable”**

...comment by a youth who participated in a Teen Dating Violence Seminar

**“Nice job! Very organized, very open. Love you guys”**

...comment by a parent who participated in the program “Parents Please Talk With Your Mouth Full”

**Needham Youth Commission  
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**[www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission](http://www.needhamma.gov/youthcommission)**